

STEPPING UP FLOWCHART

Identifying suicide risk and keeping people safe

When you ask about suicide, you need to be clear and direct, for example you could say:

"The things you're saying make it sound like you're having thoughts of suicide? Is that something that's on your mind?"

"Are you thinking about taking your own life?"

**If the answer is
Yes**

Ask about intensity

Q. How intense are your thoughts of suicide?

Q. How long have you been feeling this way?

(See the attached "Exploring intensity" sheet).

Ask about plans for suicide

Q. Have you thought about how you'd take your own life?

Q. Have you made a plan for how you'd take your life? (i.e. where, how, when)

Ask about intention

Q. Do you think you'll act on your suicidal feelings?

Yes

No

Staying Safe

Explain that you're really concerned for their safety and you don't want to leave them, until there's a plan in place to keep them safe.

Ask if they are already in touch with any support services, such as their GP or mental health services.

**If the answer is
No**

Help the person identify their protective factors

Q. What has helped to keep you safe up till now?

Q. What would help to keep you safe for the next hour, or day, or week?

Agree with the person a plan to keep them safe.

Give key contacts for mental health support

Use the attached pages to explain to the person how to access support. Many local support services are listed on www.happyoksad.org.uk.

Make sure they're clear how to get support if they don't feel they can keep themselves safe.

(See attached sheet "If someone can't cope . . .")

Emergency action

Arrange help (see attached sheet "If someone can't cope . . .").

Inform your manager, follow your policy

Follow your organisation's policy in relation to suicide risk, or disclosure of suicide.

If you don't have a policy within your organisation, PAPYRUS can advise you on drawing one up: www.PAPYRUS-uk.org
Follow your organisation's safeguarding procedure.

Help the person identify how they'll stay safe until they access further support.

If someone can't cope, or is feeling suicidal

If someone **18 or over** can't cope, is feeling desperate or having thoughts of suicide, the recommended ways to access support services are:

- to contact the person's **GP** (or out of hours, **NHS 111**)
- to contact the person's **Care Coordinator** (if they have one)
- to contact the **Warrington Assessment Team** - 01925 666647

The Assessment Team is for adults with moderate to severe symptoms of mental health problems. It's open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. GPs can refer into the Assessment Team, or people in crisis can contact the Team directly themselves.

Assessment Team staff screen each individual, over the phone, to identify their needs. Then provide advice or signpost or refer the individual to the most appropriate service.

Support workers and anyone concerned about an adult's mental health can also ring the team for advice about the most appropriate service to refer the person to.

(The Assessment Team, rather than A&E, is recommended for adults in crisis, unless they also need medical attention for their physical health)

- if there's immediate risk to life **ring 999**

These are the services people 18 and over are advised to contact if they have symptoms of mental health problems and can't cope. If someone is 18 or over and has symptoms of mental health problems, it's best not to attend the A&E department of Warrington Hospital, unless they also need medical attention for their physical health.

If someone **under 18** can't cope, is feeling desperate, or is having thoughts of suicide the recommended ways to access support services are:

- to contact the young person's **GP** (or out of hours, ring **NHS 111**)
- to contact the young person's **CAMHS worker** or **social worker** (if they have one)
- to ring **CAMHS Assessment and Response Team (CART)** for advice 01925 579405

CART is a single point of access service for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The Team supports children and young people up to the age of 18. Referrals to CART need to be made in writing, by professionals. Professionals and concerned family members, who are unsure whether a referral into the service would be appropriate, can ring the Team for advice. Children and young people can also ring CART for advice themselves. CART is open 9.00am-9.00pm, seven days a week.

- the young person can go to **Warrington A&E** (if under 18)
- if there's immediate risk to life **ring 999**

Helplines, text and web-based support

If someone is finding it hard to cope they can also contact Samaritans, CALM or PAPYRUS. These charities support people who are struggling to cope, or feeling suicidal. More details are below:

Samaritans

Samaritans offers confidential emotional support, at any time of the day or night, to anyone, whatever is troubling them. You don't have to be suicidal to get in touch with Samaritans. You can call, email, write, or visit Samaritans face-to-face.

Ring: 116 123 (free)

Visit: www.samaritans.org

Email: jo@samaritans.org

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

CALM is for men who are down, or finding it hard to cope, (though CALM will listen to anyone who needs help or support). CALM's free confidential helpline and webchat are open 7 days a week, 5pm to midnight.

Ring: 0800 58 58 58

Visit: www.thecalmzone.net

PAPYRUS - Prevention of Young Suicide

PAPYRUS' HOPELineUK is for young people who are having thoughts of suicide and anyone who is worried about a young person who may be at risk of suicide. When you ring you don't have to give your name, or any personal details. All calls are confidential, but if an advisor is concerned about a young person's safety then PAPYRUS may contact emergency services to ensure the young person doesn't come to harm.

Ring: HOPELineUK 0800 068 41 41

SMS: 07786 209697

Visit: www.papyrus-uk.org

Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org

Happy? OK? Sad?

A directory of mental health support services for Warrington

Warrington's mental health awareness site www.happyoksad.org.uk includes a directory of mental health support services. To find this go to www.happyoksad.org.uk, click on the blue "adults click here button", then click on the sub-heading "Information about local and national services and support". If there are several services which provide support around a similar issue, such as bereavement, these services are grouped under separate dropdown headings.

The page for children and young people and the page for older people, both have a similar structure to the page for adults, but the language and services are tailored to the age group.

Exploring Intensity

It would be useful for us to get a better understanding of the difficult feelings you mentioned:

- How long have you been feeling like this? (*duration*)
- What triggers feelings like this? (*where, with whom, when*)
- What effect does this have on your life? (*impact and coping*)

If the person:

- has been feeling like this for a couple of weeks
- feels like this much of the time
- has particularly strong feelings with specific triggers
- is struggling with day to day life because of their feelings

then signpost, or refer them into mental health support services.

Visit www.happyoksad.org.uk for information about mental health support in Warrington.

If the person has particularly intense or troubling feelings, then ask if they are thinking about ending their life.

See the "**Stepping up Flowchart**" for examples of useful questions to ask.

See the "**If someone can't cope . . .**" sheet for routes into services when support is needed urgently.

This information was compiled by Warrington Borough Council's Public Health Team.

It was adapted from training materials collaboratively developed by Public Health Teams in Bolton, Manchester and Stockport.